

City of Milwaukee License Division

Quarterly Newsletter



Winter 2019

From the License Division Desk

Welcome to the winter 2019 edition of our quarterly newsletter! I hope you've been warm and safe so far this season. I'd like to take a moment to share with you a few tidbits about our past year and a few updates on our year to come.

First off, we processed nearly 19,000 applications in 2018 and helped nearly 12,000 customers in-person at City Hall. In addition, we issued nearly 1,000 municipal IDs (bringing the grand total to well over 6,000), published 6 new "Clerk Notes" videos and held 4 Pivot Programs attended by nearly 100 Milwaukee entrepreneurs.

As for 2019, we have many new initiatives aimed at making the licensing process more convenient. Foremost of these is the ongoing integration of licenses into the City's [Land Management System](#). You will soon be able to apply for, manage, and check the status of many licenses from the convenience of your home computer.

Speaking of which, if you do make the trip to City Hall, you will notice our lobby has undergone a makeover. We hope you enjoy the changes and would like to thank our visitors for their patience during construction over the last month.

In addition to an updated physical space, we will also soon begin rolling out a number of new, easy-to-read forms and applications, including a fresh new webpage for browsing all our licenses and permits.

Finally, we hope you will visit Milwaukee.gov/RedTapeRescue for updates on all our ongoing initiatives, and encourage you to follow us on Facebook for up-to-the-minutes news and information.

Jessica Celella
License Division Manager

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We strive to make your experience at City Hall as quick and easy as possible.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please call 286-2238 or email license@milwaukee.gov



Who are we?

The License Division is a branch of the Common Council-City Clerk's Office. We process applications for over 100 different licenses and permits, and assist the Common Council in its deliberations regarding license matters.

The License Division can assist you with questions like: Do I need a license? What does my license allow? What is the status of my license?

More information is available on the License Division website at milwaukee.gov/license.

Tell us what you think!

We love getting feedback about this and other License Division content. Whether you have questions or suggestions, would like to contribute to a future newsletter or just feel like sending us a digital high-five, you can provide feedback using our [online survey](#) or at any of our social media pages.



Not on our mailing list?

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Need to Know

Have you ever wished you had a simplified guide to navigating the City's licensing process? In our new recurring series, we highlight 5 quick tips from various City and State departments to help your business succeed.

Five Quick Tips From: The WI Department of Revenue

1. Frame and Post

All liquor and beer licenses must be framed and posted in the room where the business is carried on. Any related permits (e.g. DOR Seller's Permit) and licenses should also be posted.

2. Operator's License

All alcohol beverage licensees should know employee and operator (bartender) license requirements. An operator's license is good in any premises in the municipality where it is issued, but it may only be used in that municipality.

3. Unauthorized Products

All alcohol beverages, cigarettes, and tobacco products must be purchased from an authorized distributor. Other retail outlets, such as grocery and liquor stores, are strictly prohibited.

4. Invoice Retention

Records for two years of alcohol beverage, cigarette, and tobacco product purchases must be kept on licensed premises. Invoices must be immediately available for inspection.

5. Inspecting Authority

All licensed premises may be inspected by law enforcement officers during all reasonable hours, including business hours. All rooms connected to a barroom, sales room, or storage area may be inspected as part of the premises.

Briefs

New and important information you need to know.

City Resolutions

- **File #181424:** Resolution designating January 26, 2019, as MKE Business Now Entrepreneurship Summit Day in the City of Milwaukee.

City Code Changes

- **File #180930:** Makes various changes to regulations, requirements and procedures for various licenses and permits, including:
 1. Exempting certain home bakers from food licensing requirements, to be consistent with a February 26, 2018, Wisconsin circuit court case.
 2. Allowing a provisional license to be granted when a licensee files a renewal application on time, but the Common Council is not able to meet to take action on the application prior to expiration of the license.
 3. Exempting a person selling billiard or pool tables or jukeboxes from the requirement to obtain an amusement machine distributor license.



Soundbites

A Conversation With: Andrew VanNatta

Interested in starting a business but don't know where to start? We sat down with the License Division's Business Systems Specialist, Andrew VanNatta, to discuss the licensing process. This is the first in a 3-part series.

Editor: How would a business decide what license, if any, they need?

Andrew: *In the past, the easiest way was to call our office, but over the past several years we've developed a suite of tools to give businesses even more options. For instance, our [Clerk Notes instructional video series](#) covers a variety of topics from bartending to used cars. I'd also recommend businesses check out our [StartSmart tool](#). It asks questions about your business and provides a list of required licenses or permits. Another option would be to attend one of our [Pivot workshops](#). Information on all these resources can be found at Milwaukee.gov/RedTapeRescue.*

Editor: I love StartSmart! Such a convenient tool. Now, say a business knows which license they need. Walk me through the application process.

Andrew: *Well, the first step is to gather all the necessary paperwork. StartSmart is a great tool for this because it provides links to everything needed on the results page. Paperwork can also be picked up at City Hall or downloaded from the License Division website. Businesses should keep in mind that some applications require plans of operation and other supplemental documents.*

Editor: So that's it? Submit an application and you're good to go?

Andrew: *Well, not quite. Some licenses have additional requirements that must be completed before the license will be issued. For example, you may need to submit fingerprints to the Milwaukee Police Department for a background investigation to be completed. You may also need to apply for additional licenses or permits from other City or State Departments, such as a DNS Occupancy Permit, a Variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals or a State Seller's Permit.*

Editor: So, from application to issuance, how long does this process take?

Andrew: *It depends. Licenses are approved either administratively by the district alderperson or through the Common Council. Generally speaking, we recommend a business plan for the process to take a minimum of 6 to 8 weeks, but it may vary depending on the license type, business plan, and whether the applicant completed all of the licensing requirements in a timely manner.*

Editor: I think this is a great place to leave off. Our readers can look forward to learning more about the Common Council approval process in our next issue. For now, maybe you can help us get to know you a bit: what are three words that best describe you?

Andrew: *Analytical. Committed. Outdoorsy.*

Licensing Notes

Upcoming License Committee Meetings:

- March 5
- April 3
- April 23
- May 14

For Applicants:

Some licenses may be approved by your local Council Member, but many require a License Committee hearing. A hearing may be scheduled if there is a change to your license, an objection was filed or there was certain police activity involving your premises. Keep this in mind and plan ahead!

The License Committee generally meets every three weeks, except for the month of August, when no meetings are scheduled. In general, expect to wait 6 to 8 weeks for your license to be granted and issued.

For Community Members:

Your voice matters! Your appearance at licensing hearings is a critical factor in all licensing decisions.

If you cannot attend a hearing, but would like to communicate your support or objection to a pending license, email your local Council Member.

Upcoming Events

Do you operate a tavern, restaurant, liquor store, or convenience store? Register for a free Pivot Workshop online at PivotMKE.eventbrite.com!

- [Wednesday, February 27](#)
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Employ Milwaukee
2342 N. 27th Street
- [Tuesday, April 30](#)
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
East Library Community Room
2320 N. Cramer Street
- [Tuesday, July 23](#)
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Ignace Indian Health Center
930 W. Historic Mitchell Street
- [Tuesday, October 29](#)
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Lake Tower, 3rd Floor
4001 S. 6th Street



Directory

City Clerk's Office License Division

City Hall Room 105
200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Phone: (414) 286-2238
Email: license@milwaukee.gov

Common Council

(414) 286-2221

Licensing Committee

- Ald. Nic Kovac (Chair)
- Ald. Terry L. Witkowski (Vice Chair)
- Ald. Milele A. Coggs
- Ald. Chantia Lewis
- Ald. Nikiya Dodd

MPD License Investigation Unit

(414) 935-7430

Department of Neighborhood Services

(414) 286-2268

Health Department

(414) 286-3674

Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement Unit

(608) 266-2772

Dear Andy

Letters to the License Division desk.



Q Dear Andy,
I used to own a junk collector business, but I moved out-of-state to pursue another job opportunity. I've recently moved back to Milwaukee and would like to get back into junk collecting, but I can't seem to find a junk collector license application on your website. What do I need to get up and running again?

Sincerely,
Junk in the Trunk

A Dear Junk in the Trunk,
The City's old "junk collector" license has been moved under its "Recycling, Salvaging or Towing" (or "RST") license.

Anyone dealing in the transport or sale of motor vehicle parts, waste tires, junk, or valuable metal must obtain an RST license. This includes all junk collectors, scrap dealers, and auto wreckers. Businesses licensed and operating as private waste collectors or used car dealers do *not* need an RST license.

Most of the rules you followed when you originally held a junk collector's license still apply. For instance, all vehicles used by a recycling or salvaging business must have identifying signs permanently affixed to both sides of the vehicle. In addition, you cannot store any goods, materials or vehicles associated with the business on the public right-of-way. You should check out [Chapter 93](#) of the Milwaukee Code of Ordinances to brush up on other regulations.

Keep in mind that an RST license is also required for anyone towing motor vehicles for the purpose of repossession, salvage, or recycling, but that's a topic for another day. Just know that towing comes with a number of additional regulations and requirements. I hope that helps a little bit!

Sincerely,
Andy

Recent Disciplinary Actions

License suspensions and revocations

- **Abyss Towing:** 960 W. Armour Ave. [File #181015](#): Revocation (Recycling, Salvaging or Towing)
- **Jay's Uptown Cafe:** 5007-09 W. Center St. [File #181070](#): 10-Day Suspension (Class B Tavern, Food Dealer and Public Entertainment Premises Licenses)
- **The Garden/Lucid:** 725-729 Milwaukee St. [File #181070](#): 15-Day Suspension (Class B Tavern, Food Dealer, Sidewalk Dining and Public Entertainment Premises Licenses)
- **Ugly's:** 1125 N. Old World Third St. [File #181144](#): 20-Day Suspension (Class B Tavern, Food Dealer and Public Entertainment Premises Licenses)